

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**1. Drawings**

As noted above, Fig. 4 has been revised to include a depiction of the grounding of pin 13, per the objection made in the Office Action.

2. Specification

In the specification, paragraph [0019] has been amended to reference the branched bus (18') depicted in Fig. 2, and paragraph [0024] has been amended to reference the pins (21) depicted in Fig. 3. No new matter has been introduced.

Also per the objections in the Office Action, paragraph [0044] has been amended to eliminate the duplicate word, "been."

3. Claim Objections

Claims 1, 6, and 13-20 were objected to for informalities, and have been appropriately amended (or canceled in light of other amendments). These amendments do not narrow the scope of the claims in any way, as the words added are superfluous.

4. Claim Rejections - Indefiniteness

Claim 11 was rejected as indefinite for lack of antecedent basis for the term "said clock sequence," and has been amended to change its dependency to claim 7 rather than claim 10. It is submitted that this amendment does not narrow the scope of claim 11 as it merely corrects a typographical error.

5. Claim Rejections - Prior Art

All claims but claims 6, 7, and 15 stand rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,584,907 to Boucher ("Boucher"); claims 6, 7, and 15 were found allowable in substance. Independent claims 1, 13, and 17 have been amended to clarify their limitations that are not taught or suggested by Boucher. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to add the underlined terms in the following limitation:

selectively charging said slave devices with electrical energy supplied by said master device on said bus, wherein said charging of said slave devices is temporally staggered so that selected slave devices begin charging at different times from other slave devices.

Similarly, claim 13 has been amended to add the underlined terms in the following limitation:

configured and/or programmed so that said slave devices are selectively charged with said electrical energy in a temporally staggered fashion so that selected slave devices begin charging at different times from other slave devices.

Finally, claim 17 has been amended to add the underlined terms in the following limitation:

configured and/or programmed to be selectively charged, during staggered charging of [[in]] said electronic system, such that charging of said slave device begins at a different time from other slave devices.

These added terms each clarify that the claimed subject matter requires the capability of beginning charging of selected slave devices at different, temporally staggered, times from other slave devices.

In contrast, Boucher discloses a stepwise process of charging slave devices in temporally staggered intervals of partial charging within each slave device, wherein the first and each subsequent interval of charging begins at the same time for all connected slave devices (and each subsequent interval occurs in response to an additional arm command). See Fig. 3 and col. 14, lines 15-65. Thus, in Boucher, "different slave devices [do not] begin charging at different times from each other" as is recited in the claims of this application.

Favorable action on this application is thus respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments: Replacement & Annotated Drawing Sheets